
Finding aid for the Young Oak Kim Biography papers 3006

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USC Libraries East Asian Library

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Language of Material: English

Contributing Institution: USC Libraries East Asian Library

Title: Young Oak Kim Biography papers

creator: Kim, Yǒng-ok, 1919-2005

creator: Han, Woo Sung

Identifier/Call Number: 3006

Identifier/Call Number: 950

Physical Description: 5 Linear Feet7 boxes

Date (inclusive): 1944-1953, 1999

Abstract: Young Oak Kim was a Korean American United States Army officer, civic leader, and humanitarian. This collection comprises military documents and audiovisual materials relating to Kim's service in World War II and the Korean War, collected as well as created by author Woo Sung Han during the research and writing process of his 2011 biography entitled "Unsung Hero: The Col. Young O. Kim Story."

Organization

The collection is organized into the following series: 1. military documents; 2. Audiovisual materials. Arrangement within each series is chronological.

Scope and Contents

The Young Oak Kim Biography papers (1944-1953, 1999), consist of military documents and audiovisual materials relating to Young Oak Kim's involvement in World War II and the Korean War, collected and created by Woo Sung Han during the writing of the biography "Unsung Hero: the Col. Young O. Kim Story." The majority of the material is comprised of military documents from the 1940s and 1950s, in the form of command and intelligence reports, relating to the US Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 31st Infantry, both of which Kim served under during World War II and Korean War respectively. These items have been declassified and were photocopied from the National Archives. Each report is hundreds of pages long, and remain loose inside archival boxes.

The significant date gap within the collection is reflected through the audiovisual materials, which were created in 1999 by Han during the research and writing process of his book. They comprise primarily audiocassette tapes of informal interviews with Kim as well as with Military colleagues and officials who served with him during World War II and the Korean War. The remainder of the collection consists of one VHS tape regarding Kim's career with the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team, and a typed transcript and floppy disk of an interview with General William McCaffrey, Kim's commanding officer during the Korean War.

Biographical Note

Young Oak Kim, born in Los Angeles in 1919, was a Korean American United States Army officer during World War II and the Korean War, as well as a civic leader and humanitarian. He was a member of the U.S. 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He was also a combat leader in Italy and France during World War II. During the Korean War, Kim was assigned to the 31st Infantry of the 7th Infantry Division. The 31st Infantry played a significant role in stopping Chinese troops and pushing them back above the 38th parallel. Shortly after this, Kim was seriously wounded in combat. He served out the remainder of his participation in the Korean War as the commander of the 31st Infantry's 1st Battalion, the first minority officer in U.S. History to do so. After serving a year in this post, Kim left Korea in September of 1952.

Thereafter, Kim became an instructor at the U.S. Army Infantry School in Fort Benning, Georgia, was both a staff officer and lieutenant colonel in Germany, and was an instructor of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. In the 1960s, Kim returned to Korea as a U.S. Military Advisor to the South Korean army and was thereafter promoted to rank of colonel. Kim has been awarded 19 decorations and medals for his military service, including the Distinguished Silver Cross, the Purple Heart, the American Defensive Service Medal, the Silver Star, and the Bronze Star. After 30 years of experience, Kim retired from military service in 1972 with 80% disability.

In 1973, Kim joined Special Services for Groups (SSG), a non-profit health and human service organization. His interest led him to serving on the Board of United Way, where he would remain for 10 years, focusing his efforts on underserved ethnic communities in Los Angeles and working with providing them linguistic and cultural competent services. He was integral in adding various Asian American Centers to the United Way, as well as diversifying the Board by including more Asian American members.

In 1975, Kim founded the Korean Youth and Cultural Center, now entitled the Koreatown Youth and Community Center. From 1986 to 1988, he served as a member of Serving the Family and Friends of Keiro Homes, and throughout the 1990s

was Chairman of the Center for Pacific Asian Families, which focused on addressing violence and sexual assault in Asian and Pacific Islander communities. From 1989 until 2005, Kim served as Chairman of the 100th/442nd/MIS Memorial Foundation. Kim died as a result of cancer on December 29, 2005.

In 2010, the Young Oak Kim Center for Korean American Studies opened at the University of California, Riverside. The Young Oak Kim Center is the publisher of "Unsung Hero: the Col. Young O. Kim Story", written by Woo Sung Han and translated into English by Professor Edward T. Chang. Han was a member of the Korean Air Force. Along with his biography on Kim has written about Korean American Pioneer Aviators. His research materials regarding Kim's military career comprise this collection.

Conditions Governing Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE. Advance notice required for access.

Conditions Governing Use

All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Curator of the Korean Heritage Library. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Korean Heritage Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

Preferred Citation

[Box/Folder# or Item name]. Young Oak Kim Biography papers, Collection no. 3006, Korean Heritage Library, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

Immediate Source of Acquisition

The collection was acquired as part of a mutual arrangement between USC's Korean Heritage Library and Woo Sung Han, the author of the Young Oak Kim biography, "Unsung Hero: the Col. Young O. Kim Story." USC financed the cost of photocopying of the military documents that Han used for the research of the biography and, as exchange, received them as part of the collection. In return, Han donated his audiovisual materials of interviews to include in the collection.

Related Archival Materials

Related materials pertaining to Young Oak Kim can be found within USC's Korean-American Digital Archive in the form of oral histories, as part of the Korean American Museum Oral History Series subcollection. <http://libguides.usc.edu/KADA>

Subjects and Indexing Terms

Korean American men -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Korean American soldiers -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources
Korean War, 1950-1953 -- Personal narratives -- Archival resources
Korean War, 1950-1953 -- Regimental histories -- Archival resources
Audiocassettes
Biography (genre)
Interviews (Sound recordings)
Military records
Kim, Yŏng-ok, 1919-2005 -- Archives
Han, Woo Sung -- Archives
McCaffrey, William J. (William Joseph), 1914-2006 -- Archives

Military documents

Box 6, Item 1	Command report 442nd RCT (146 pages) 1944-03-1944-04
Box 6, Item 2	Command report 442nd Regimental Combat Team 1944-10-1944-11
Box 6, Item 3	Command reports 442nd RCT 1944-10-1945-10
Box 6, Item 4	Command report 442nd RCT 1945
Box 6, Item 5	[Historical reports and general's orders 442nd RCT] 1945-1946
Box 7	Command reports - 31st Infantry RCT 1950-10-1951-05
Box 2, Item 1	Command report US Army, 31st Infantry Regiment 1951-01
Box 2, Item 2	[S-3 journal, 2nd Bn 31st Infantry] 1951-02
Box 3, Item 1	Command reports, 31st Int. RCT US Army (451 pages) 1951-03
Box 2, Item 3	Command report 31st Infantry, US Army 1951-04
Box 5, Item 1	Command report 31st Infantry Regiment US Army (Korean War) 1951-06

Box 6, Item 6	U.N. command reports 1951-07
Box 5, Item 2	Command report 31st Infantry Regiment US Army (Korean War) 1951-08
Box 3, Item 2	Command report 31st Inf. Regiment 9th Division, US Army (812 pages) 1951-09-1951-10
Box 2, Item 4	Command report 31st Infantry Regiment, US Army 1951-12
Box 4, Item 2	[Periodic intelligence reports, 31st Infantry] 1951-12
Box 5, Item 3-4	Command report 31st Infantry Regiment US Army (Korean War) 1952-06
Box 4, Item 1	Command report 31st Infantry Regiment (Korean War) 1953-10

Audiovisual materials

Box 1	100th/442nd (Korean Lieutenant) [VHS] undated
Box 1, Folder 1	[General McCaffrey interview transcript and floppy disk] undated
Box 1	General William McCaffrey [interview, 4 cassettes] undated
Box 1	Mr. Bob Gibson (UP, AP war correspondent) [interview, 2 cassettes] undated
Box 1	Mr. Charles Weisenberg (war correspondent, Korean War) [interview] undated
Box 1	Col. John Covach (Fairfax, Virginia) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-01-16
Box 1	Myong-sin Chae (Seoul, Korea) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-02-15
Box 1	Song-Suk Song (Los Angeles) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-03-19
Box 1	Su-gun Ae (Los Angeles) [interview] 1999-05
Box 1	Mr. Irving Akahoshi (Irvine, California) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-06
Box 1	Col. Kim Yo (Los Angeles) [3 cassettes] 1999-06
Box 1	Capt. Sakal Takahashi (Los Angeles) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-06-05
Box 1	Col. Young Oak Kim (Las Vegas, NV) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-08-22
Box 1	Japanese American Soldiers in Korean War, Los Angeles [interview] 1999-08-25
Box 1	Edward Nakata (Hawaiian garden) [interview] 1999-09
Box 1	Mr. Mariano De Vecchi (Salerno, Italy) [interview] 1999-09-14
Box 1	Mussolini's soldier (Cisterna, Italy) [interview] 1999-09-16
Box 1	Mr. Ametiao Salvini, journalist and community historian (Anzio, Italy) [interview] 1999-09-16
Box 1	Col. Young Oak Kim (Las Vegas, NV) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-09-25-1999-09-26
Box 1	Col. Young Oak Kim [interview, 2 cassettes, parts one and two] 1999-09-26
Box 1	Col. Young Oak Kim: slave labor [interview, part three] 1999-09-26
Box 1	Mr. William Quinn (Laughlin, NV) [interview] 1999-10-11
Box 1	Mr. Joe Culp (Laughlin) [interview] 1999-10-11
Box 1	Col. Young Oak Kim (Laughlin, NV) [interview] 1999-10-11
Box 1	Col. Kim and Col. John Covach (Laughlin, NV) [interview] 1999-10-11
Box 1	Mr. Frank Wise (Laughlin, NV) [interview] 1999-10-11
Box 1	William Dolphin and Swan Soderlind (Laughlin, NV) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-10-12
Box 1	Mr. Allen Takamiyashiro (Laughlin, NV) [interview, 2 cassettes] 1999-10-12
Box 1	Col. John Covach (Laughlin, NV) [interview, 3 cassettes] 1999-10-13
Box 1	Lt. Col. Kwang Soo Kim (Seoul, Korea) [interview] 1999-10-20
Box 1	Baik Jin Song (Seoul, Korea) [2 cassettes] 1999-10-21